

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of reporting a location, comprising:

determining whether a location finding device is within a first distance of a first location; and

when the location finding device is not within the first distance of the first location: determining whether a wireless access point is available, and transmitting information indicative of a location of the location finding device to a server via the wireless access point, when the wireless access point is determined to be available.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the determining whether a wireless access point is available comprises:

determining whether a preferred provider access point is available, and

when the preferred provider wireless access point is determined not to be available, determining whether any wireless access point is available.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein responsive to the server receiving the information, the method further comprises:

determining whether a preferred provider is located within a predefined distance of the location finding device; and

when the preferred provider is determined to be located within the predefined distance of the location finding device, conveying information associated with the location finding device to the preferred provider.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein the conveying information associated with the location finding device comprises contacting the preferred provider via one of a voice telephone call, a facsimile message, and an e-mail message.

5. The method of claim 3, wherein the conveying information associated with the location finding device comprises transmitting the information associated with the location finding device to a database of the preferred provider.

6. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
determining the location of the location finding device based on received global positioning system satellite signals.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the first distance is a distance at which the location finding device can receive a message from a device located at the first location.

8. The method of claim 7, further comprising:
transmitting the message from the device at predetermined intervals; and
the determining whether the location finding device is within the first distance comprises determining whether the message was received within a predefined time interval.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein when the location finding device is determined to not be within the first distance and the wireless access point is determined to be available, the method further comprises:

determining the location of the location finding device based on received global positioning system satellite signals.

10. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

receiving a command for changing a rate at which information indicative of the location of the location finding device is reported to the server; and

changing the rate at which the information indicative of the location of the location finding device is reported to the server.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein the determining whether the location finding device is within the first distance of the first location comprises:

collecting global positioning system satellite signals;

determining the location of the location finding device based on information included in the global positioning system satellite signals;

calculating a distance between the location of the location finding device and the first location; and

comparing the first distance to the calculated distance.

12. A location finding device comprising:

a wireless transceiver configured to communicate with a wireless access device;
and

a global positioning system receiver configured to receive global positioning system satellite signals, wherein

the location finding device is configured to determine a current location of the location finding device using the received global positioning system satellite signals and report the current location to a server via the wireless transceiver when an absence of signals periodically transmitted from a device is detected by the location finding device.

13. The location finding device of claim 8, wherein the location finding device is configured to adjust a frequency of reporting the current information in response to receiving a command to adjust the frequency of reporting.

14. A location finding device comprising:
means for determining whether a location finding device is within a first distance of a specific location or area;
means for determining whether a wireless access point is available; and
means for reporting information indicative of a location of the location finding device to a database server via the wireless access point.

15. The location finding device of claim 14, wherein the means for determining whether a wireless access point is available comprises:

means for determining whether a preferred provider access point is available; and

means for determining whether any wireless access point is available.

16. The location finding device of claim 14, wherein the means for determining whether the location finding device is within the first distance comprises:

means for collecting global positioning system satellite signals;

means for determining the location of the location finding device based on information included in the global positioning system satellite signals;

means for calculating a distance between the location of the location finding device and the specific location or area; and

means for comparing the first distance to the calculated distance.

17. The location finding device of claim 14, wherein the means for determining whether the location finding device is within the first distance comprises:

means for receiving a message transmitted from a device at predetermined intervals; and

means for determining whether the message was received within a predetermined time interval.

18. The location finding device of claim 14, further comprising:

means for adjusting a rate at which the means for reporting reports information indicative of the location of the location finding device to the database server.

19. The location finding device of claim 18, wherein the means for adjusting the rate is configured to adjust the rate in response to the location finding device receiving a command for adjusting the rate.

20. A server for receiving location information from a locator device, the server comprising:

- a database configured to store information associated with a plurality of users, and
- a processing device configured to:

- receive a signal transmitted from the locator device associated with a first one of the users, and

- identify contact information associated with the first user stored in the database.

21. The server of claim 20, wherein:

- the database is further configured to store information associated with a plurality of preferred providers, and

- the processing device is further configured to:

- use the stored information associated with the plurality of preferred providers to determine whether a preferred provider is located within a predefined distance of a location of the locator device indicated by the received signal from the locator device, and

use the stored information associated with the plurality of preferred providers to convey information associated with one of the users who is associated with the locator device, when a preferred provider is determined to be within the predefined distance of the locator device.

22. The server of claim 21, wherein the processing device being configured to use the stored information associated with the plurality of preferred providers to convey information associated with one of the users who is associated with the locator device, comprises the processing device being configured to contact the preferred provider via one of a voice telephone call, a facsimile message, and an e-mail.

23. The server of claim 21, wherein the processing device being configured to use the stored information associated with the plurality of preferred providers to convey information associated with one of the users who is associated with the locator device, comprises the processing device being configured to transmit the information associated with the one of the users to a database of the preferred provider.

24. The server of claim 20, further comprising:
a network interface configured to connect the server to a network, wherein
the server is configured to send a command to the locator device to change a rate of reporting of the locator device to the database server.

25. The server of claim 20, wherein the processing device is further configured to transmit at least one of an e-mail, a pager message, and a facsimile message based on the contact information and in response to the received signal.

26. The server of claim 20, wherein the processing device is further configured to make a telephone call based on the contact information.

27. The server of claim 20, wherein the signal includes location information identifying a location of the locator device.

28. The server of claim 27, wherein the signal represents an emergency request message.